



DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY

OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, STATE FIRE ACADEMY AND THE STATE HAZ-MAT TEAM

FIRE SAFETY NEWS



December 2016

Inside this issue:

Christmas Tree Facts	1
Academy Courses	2
NFIRS Reporting	3
Hazmat Notes	4
CO Alliance	5
Project Holiday	6
Home Heating Safety	7
Fire Academy Training	8
Calendar of Fire Events	11
Contact Information	12



RESEARCH

HOME CHRISTMAS TREE FIRES FACT SHEET

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 210 home1 structure fires per year that began with Christmas trees in 2010-2014. These fires caused an annual average of six civilian deaths, 16 civilian injuries, and \$16.2 million in direct property damage.

On average, one of every 34 reported home Christmas tree fires resulted in a death, compared to an average of one death per 142 total reported home fires.

Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are much more likely to be deadly than most other fires.

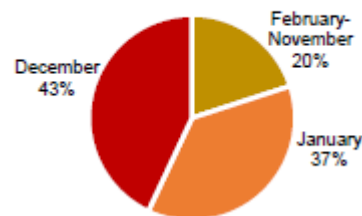
In one-quarter (26%) of the Christmas tree fires and 80% of the deaths, some type of heat source, such as a candle or equipment, was too close to the tree.

Electrical failures or malfunctions were also factors in one-quarter (26%) of Christmas tree fires.

Four of every five Christmas tree fires occurred in December and January.

More than two of every five Christmas tree fires (43%) were in December. More than one-third (37%) were in January.

Home structure fires in which Christmas trees were first ignited by month: 2010-2014



Leading causes of Christmas tree fires

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in one-third (35%) of home Christmas tree fires.

- * Eighteen percent of home Christmas tree fires involved decorative lights.
- * Wiring or related equipment was involved in 11%.
- * Cords or plugs were involved in 4%.

Twenty-three percent of Christmas tree fires were intentional. More than half of these intentional fires occurred in January.

Heating equipment was involved in 15%.

Ten percent of Christmas tree fires were started by someone playing with fire.

Candles started 8% of home Christmas tree structure fires.

Upcoming Board meetings

Electrical Board Meeting:
December 6, 2016 9AM

Access Board Meeting:
December 12, 2016 1:30PM

Elevator Board Meeting:
December 13, 2016 9AM

Plumbing Board Meeting:
January 10, 2017, 9AM

~BOARD DEADLINE REMINDER~

If you have a board agenda item, it needs to be received at the Central Office no later than **2 weeks prior to the board meeting.**
(for all boards – Access, Electrical, Elevator & Plumbing)

Continued on next page:

Leading areas of origin

Almost two of every five (38%) home Christmas tree fires started in the living room, family room, or den. All of the fatalities and three-quarters of the injuries resulted from fires started in this area.

Seven percent were chimney or flue fires.

To learn more about holiday safety, see NFPA's [Winter Holiday Safety Tips](#).

1 Homes include one- or two-family homes and apartments or other multi-family housing.
Source: NFPA, Fire Analysis & Research Division, www.nfpa.org

NFPA, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169, www.nfpa.org

Fire Analysis & Research Division, osds@nfpa.org



2016 National Fire Academy Courses to be Held in Vermont

Each year, the Vermont Fire Academy hosts National Fire Academy direct delivery courses in an effort to bring fresh, new courses to our responders without the long travel to the National Fire Academy. The following course offerings are being presented around Vermont. All classes will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day and are available at no cost. Apply by submitting a [General Admission Application](#) to the Vermont Fire Academy by the application deadlines listed below.

Strategies and Tactics for Initial Company Operations

Location: South Burlington Police Department
Course Date: January 9 & 10, 2017
Application Deadline: November 23, 2016

Strategies and Tactics for Initial Company Operations

Location: St. Johnsbury - exact location TBD
Course Date: January 21 & 22, 2017
Application Deadline: December 5, 2016

Leadership I for Fire and EMS: Strategies for Company Success

Location: Brattleboro Fire Station
Course Date: January 28 & 29, 2017
Application Deadline: December 12, 2016

Residential Sprinkler Plan Review

Location: Division of Fire Safety Central Office - Berlin
Course Date: March 29 & 30, 2017
Application Deadline: February 10, 2017

Training Operations in Small Departments

Location: Vermont Fire Academy - Pittsford
Course Date: June 24 & 25, 2017
Application Deadline: May 8, 2017

For More information on these courses Please contact the Fire Academy at
93 Davison Drive, Pittsford, Vermont 05763
TEL: 802-483-2755 FAX: 802-483-2464
Toll Free: 1-800-615-3473
www.vtfireacademy.org



2016 NFIRS SUBMITTED AND MISSING INCIDENT REPORTS - UPDATE

National Fire Incident Reporting System

Fighting Fire with Facts

It's Time to Get Your Reports Up-to-Date!

NFIRS is the fire service's tool to report its emergency responses. It is the largest incident-based database in the world.

The fire service should be reporting all of its emergency response incidents to NFIRS. The numbers tell the fire service's story, and only the fire service can best tell its story. In our ever-changing world, the fire service's first line of defense is timely accurate information that is shared, integrated, analyzed, and acted upon quickly and effectively. Since NFIRS is becoming more open and visible to its users, the fire service must make it count by caring about its data and sharing its data.

**The deadline for submitting all 2016 reports is
January 25, 2017!**

Fire department reporting is required by state law. And each fire department is required to submit their emergency incident data reports to the Vermont State Fire Marshal's Office in accordance with Vermont Law 20 V.S.A. Section 2833.

The Division of Fire Safety continues to thank those departments that report valid incident reports on a timely basis. These reports are being used at the state and national level to make decisions that will affect public safety and the fire service for years to come.

On our website, there will be a report listing the current data entry status of Vermont's fire departments -- if your department is behind please make every effort to get caught up as soon as possible.

For additional Incident Reporting Resources or information please visit:

<http://firesafety.vermont.gov/fireservice/Fireincident>

NFIRS RESETS

In an effort to better support Vermont's departments and to increase the timely resets of NFIRS accounts,

All reset inquiries should now be sent to dps.vfirs@vermont.gov

Please include: Your department name, FDID #, and the account user name. We will reset the account to the default password as soon as possible. Please note, due to the massive volume of phone calls we receive this time of year, we are not able to accept reset requests by phone. An email allows us to re-set you faster.

**HAZMAT HOTLINE 1-800-641-5005****New State of Vermont Hazardous Materials Team (VHMRT) Resources**

The VHMRT now placed a new rapid response truck and Decon/USAR Support trailer into service. This equipment is stored in Lyndonville, thanks to the Lyndonville Fire Department. This provides the northeast area of the state with resources they previously did not have.

Below are photos of the new equipment now stored in Lyndonville;



The Truck (VHMRT 4) is equipped with two (2) Altair 5 Muligas Meters, two (2) Ammonia Meters and various spill supplies.

The trailer is equipped with a full complement of Decon equipment, 6000 watt LP Gas Generator, Incident Command area and scene lighting.

The VHMRT also has a new LP Gas Response Trailer, which is housed at the Barre Office. This trailer and equipment was made available through a grant from the Propane Gas Association of New England (PGANE).

The VHMRT Team has attended training provided by PGANE at the Dead River Propane Facility in Bellows Falls using the equipment from this trailer.

Here is an image of the Trailer;



Equipment on board the trailer includes LP Gas Compressors, LP Gas Pump, Flare Tool with various fittings and hoses, and plug/patching supplies.

This equipment can be requested through the Hazmat Hotline 800-641-5005

The Vermont and New Hampshire Alliance highlights Carbon Monoxide Awareness and Prevention at a first ever Bi-State CO Summit

Created by Mary MacCaffrie, M.Ed. Public Education Administrator - Office of the NH State Fire Marshal



Nearly 75 fire personnel, educators, and service providers attended The Vermont – New Hampshire Alliance for Prevention of Carbon Monoxide Incidents: The CO Alliance first Carbon Monoxide Awareness and Prevention Summit at the Fireside Inn in West Lebanon on November 30th.

The focus for the day was to provide a professional opportunity to convene multiple stakeholders to explore carbon monoxide poisoning issues in the bi-state region. The event began with a video welcome from Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster, who will be reintroducing her CO Poisoning Prevention Act to the 115th Congress in January, 2017.

The keynote speaker for the day was Scott Ayers, Fire Protection Engineer from the US Consumer Product Safety Commission. He spoke about the work that the CPSC has done to make sure that CO alarms are efficient and safe.

Four CO incident survivor and fatality stories were shared. The audience was brought to tears and became invigorated to become involved in working on preventing any further CO events.

We were pleased that Albert Donnay, Consulting Toxicologist and Environmental Health Engineer and Research Associate at the John Hopkins sleep Disorders Center came and shared important facts about low level CO exposure, its effects on individuals and his knowledge on treatment of carbon monoxide exposures.




J. William Degnan, NH State Fire Marshal, Michael Desrochers, Executive Director Vermont Division of Fire Safety and William Irwin, Radiological and Toxicological Sciences Program Chief at VT Department of Health sat on a panel presentation discussing the critical issues and best practices around CO safety, awareness and prevention.

The day culminated with workgroups brainstorming ideas on Messaging and Education, Community Involvement, and Policy Recommendations. Next steps were discussed.

Members of the Bi-State CO Alliance includes both State Fire Marshals and personnel, personnel from the Propane Gas Association of New England, the Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine, the Injury Prevention Center at CHaD-Safe Kids, NH, an Oil and Propane Company, and the Vermont Department of Health as well as CO survivors.

NFPA's "Project Holiday" campaign provides simple steps for a safe holiday season

From NFPA's Safety Source Blog

Blog Post created by [Lisa Braxton](#) 



NFPA provides a wealth of safety information to help ensure the holiday season is a safe one.

It's time to deck the halls and raise awareness in your community about fire safety. "[Project Holiday](#)," NFPA's annual holiday fire safety campaign, provides a comprehensive library of information to help ensure the holiday season is a safe one. Consider these statistics:

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 35% of home Christmas tree fires. One-fifth (20%) of the decoration fires started in the kitchen. One out of six (17%) started in the living room, family room or den.

The top three days for home candle fires were Christmas, New Year's Day, and Christmas Eve.

Holiday cooking: On Christmas Day 2014, there were 780 reported fires in the U.S. involving cooking equipment, 65 percent above the average number of fires per day. On Christmas Eve there were 750 cooking fires reported, 57 percent above the average.

Candle fires: From 2009 to 2013 candles started 38 percent of home decoration structure fires. The top four days for home candle fires were New Year's Day, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and Christmas Eve.

Christmas trees: Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they occur, they are more likely to be serious. From 2009 to 2013, U.S. fire department responded to an average of 210 home fires that started with Christmas trees per year. These fires caused an average of 7 deaths, 19 injuries, and \$17.5 million in direct property damage annually.

"Project Holiday" provides easy access to not only these and other statistics, but safety tip sheets, videos, and [materials for the kids](#). Go to: <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/wildfire-and-seasonal-fires/winter-holiday-safety> for additional information and resources.

Baby, It's Cold Outside! Heat Your Home Safely This Winter

Do the chilly temperatures have you dreaming of cozy gatherings around a brightly lit fire? Your home's heating systems are working double time to keep you warm this winter. Whether your ideal winter retreat is in the warm glow of the family room fireplace or sitting by a fire under the stars, VT Division of Fire Safety says safety should be your first priority. Follow these helpful tips to keep you and your family safe when you use heating systems, fireplaces and wood stoves:



Fossil fuel fired heating systems should be cleaned and inspected at least every two years.

Have your fireplace and wood stoves inspected before you begin using them each year, have the chimney cleaned to remove creosote, which can ignite and start a chimney fire.”

Use a tempered glass or metal screen over the fireplace opening to keep sparks inside. Never use papers, trash or liquid fuel. Burn only wood in fireplaces and wood or wood pellets in wood stoves.



Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from fireplaces and wood stoves. The openings can get hot enough to burn skin, so keep children and pets far away from them. When you're finished with your fire, put it out before you leave home or fall asleep. When you clean up, place the ashes inside a metal can with a lid. Store the can outside, away from the home, until the ashes are completely cold.

Use portable heaters that have been listed by a testing laboratory (look for the laboratory's label). These heaters should have an automatic shut-off switch so that if they are tipped over, they will turn off on their own. Plug portable electric heaters directly into the wall outlet; don't use an extension cord or power strip. Unvented, fuel-fired room heaters and unvented fireplaces are not allowed in any building subject to the VT Building Code as they can create a Carbon Monoxide hazard.

Evenings (5-8 p.m.) are the peak time for home heating fires. Turn space heaters off when you leave the room or fall asleep.

Older adults are at increased risk from home fires. Older adults have a higher home fire death rate, and heating is the second leading cause of fire deaths for people ages 65 and over.

Plan for emergencies. Older adults may move more slowly or have trouble hearing a smoke alarm because of hearing loss. Make a home fire escape plan around their abilities.

Keep the telephone, hearing aids, and eyeglasses next to the bed. If someone in your care uses a cane or wheelchair, decide who will help him or her get out in an emergency.

For additional fire safety information contact your local fire department or at Firesafety.vermont.gov



93 Davison Drive, Pittsford, Vermont 05763

TEL: 802-483-2755 FAX: 802-483-2464

Toll Free: 1-800-615-3473

www.vtfireacademy.org



Photovoltaic Safety for Firefighters Courses Announced

The Vermont Fire Academy released a new course titled Photovoltaic Safety for Firefighters in August of 2016. After a number of successful deliveries statewide, requests continued to be submitted for more offerings of this course, so we have added more venues and dates to meet the demand. Register for any venue by submitting a [General Admission Application](#) to the Vermont Fire Academy two weeks prior to the course delivery date.

Solar Photovoltaic (PV) systems are becoming more common on homes and businesses across Vermont. Building mounted PV systems present special considerations for firefighters when handling emergencies within these buildings and around these systems. This course will provide the participants with information about what firefighters need to know to safely deal with fires in buildings equipped with PV systems and other emergencies that occur around ground mounted PV equipment.

Topics include an introduction to photovoltaics and electrical theory, recognition of PV systems and components, general PV system operation, common safety labeling, tactical considerations, disconnecting means, fire suppression and ventilation issues, and the hazards associated with fire service operations in the area of a PV system.

All applications are due two weeks prior to the scheduled class date. See all the dates and venues below:

Location: Tracy Hall, Norwich Fire Department
Date: Monday, January 9, 2017
Application deadline: Monday, December 26, 2016
Time: 1830 - 2230

Location: Shrewsbury Town Meeting Hall
Date: Thursday, January 19, 2017
Application deadline: Thursday, January 5, 2017
Time: 1830 - 2230

Location: Pawlet Fire Station
Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2017
Application deadline: Tuesday, December 27, 2016
Time: 1800 - 2200

Location: Fairfax Fire Station
Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2017
Application deadline: Monday, January 16, 2017
Time: 1800 - 2200

Location: Weston Fire Station
Date: Thursday, January 12, 2017
Application deadline: Monday, December 29, 2016
Time: 1830 - 2230

Location: Waitsfield/Fayston Fire Station
Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2017
Application deadline: Wednesday, January 18, 2017
Time: 1830 - 2230



Firefighter Certification Renewals Due by December 31st

It's that time of year again when Vermont Fire Department Chief's/ Training Officer's will be receiving recertification letters for their certified Firefighters. Recertification is done on an annual basis for certified firefighters to maintain their certification. It is important that these forms are reviewed closely.

Firefighter Certification is valid for 1 year and all certifications expire on December 31st. Renewal of your certification is achieved by completing 24 hours of continued training. Prior to your certification expiring, a recertification form will be sent to the Chief of your Department of record for verification of your continued training. The following is required on an annual basis for recertification of Firefighter I, II, and Fire Officer Certifications:

- Complete a hazardous materials refresher on an annual basis to maintain your current level of Hazardous Materials Certification.
- Complete a CPR/AED refresher to maintain a minimum of a valid American Red Cross, American Heart Association or equivalent CPR/AED card.
- Complete necessary SCBA training to maintain competence in respirator operation, donning, and use.
- Additional training in other subjects commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of your certification level consistent with Training Council curriculum, NFPA 1001 knowledge and skill requirements, and with an emphasis on structural firefighting.

The department Chief or Training Officer must review the Recertification Verification Form to verify that all certified firefighters listed have met the annual recertification requirements. If a firefighter is no longer affiliated with your department, please note that on the form so that they can be removed from your list. If a certified firefighter is not on your list and should be, please add them. Make any required changes, indicate the hours of training for each firefighter, sign the form, and return it to the Vermont Fire Academy by either mail, e-mail or fax.

If you do not receive your renewed certification, please check to see if your Chief has submitted the recertification form.



Fire Instructor I Course Announced

Location: South Burlington Police Complex,
19 Gregory Drive, South Burlington

Orientation Date: Wednesday, January 11, 2017

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, December 28, 2016

Time: 0830 to 1700 each day

This program is designed to qualify fire service responders to deliver instruction from a prepared lesson plan. Upon successful completion, students are awarded nationally registered certifications in accordance with NFPA 1041, Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications, 2012 edition.

Prerequisites:


- Currently active in the Fire Service with a minimum of three years experience
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Current Firefighter I or II Certification

To register, download the [General Admission Application](#), fill it out, and return it to the Vermont Fire Academy by the registration deadline. Priority will go to Vermont Firefighters. The class maximum is 12 students. Please note students will need a laptop/computer access for homework assignments. Fire Service Instructor I certification is mandatory for Fire Officer certification and to be considered for employment as a Vermont Fire Academy Instructor. Attendance at every class meeting is mandatory for successful completion of this course.



Kidde recalls millions of combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

From NFPAs Safety Source Blog

Blog Post created by [Lisa Braxton](#) 

Kidde is recalling millions of Night Hawk combination smoke/carbon monoxide (CO) alarms sold in the United States and Kidde combo alarm being recalled Canada. According to Consumer Affairs, the alarm can fail to continue to chirp when it reaches its seven-year end of life if the batteries are replaced, leading consumers to believe it's still working. This poses a risk to consumers of not being alerted to a fire or CO incident in their home.

The company has received reports of incidents with the recalled alarms, but no injuries have been reported. The recall involves Kidde Night Hawk talking combo smoke/CO alarm, model number KN-COSM-IB and manufacture dates between June 1, 2004 and December 31, 2010.

The alarms are hard-wired and the unit has a compartment on the back for a replaceable 9-volt battery. Consumers may contact Kidde online or call 855-239-0490.



State of Vermont Department of Public Safety

Division of Fire Safety

www.firesafety.vermont.gov

CALENDAR OF FIRE EVENTS

December 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Wishing you a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!



Date	Event	Location
6	Electrical Board Meeting	BERLIN
12	Access Board Meeting	BERLIN
13	Elevator Board Meeting	BERLIN
21	Division Training- Staff only	BERLIN

January 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



Date	Event	Location
2	New Years Day Observed~State offices Closed~	ALL
10	Plumbing Board	BERLIN
16	Martin Luther King Day ~State offices Closed~	ALL
30	Access Board	BERLIN



State of Vermont Division of Fire Safety
1311 US Route 302—Berlin Suite 600
Barre, VT 05641-2351
FIRESAFETY.VERMONT.GOV

DECEMBER 2016

*To be added to the monthly newsletter email
mailing list contact the Central Office
(802) 479-7561*

**REMEMBER Smoke Detectors, Fire Sprinklers and Carbon
Monoxide Detectors Save Lives**

Vermont Department of Public Safety

Division of Fire Safety

Central Office

1311 US Route 302— Suite 600
Barre, VT 05641-2351
Phone (802) 479-7561 Fax (802) 479-7562
Toll Free (800) 640-2106

HAZMAT Response Team

Phone (802) 479-7586
Fax (802) 479-7562
Toll Free (800) 641-5005

Vermont Fire Academy

93 Davison Drive
Pittsford, VT 05763
Phone (802) 483-2755 Fax (802) 483-2464
Toll Free (800) 615-3473

Regional Offices:

Williston

380 Hurricane Lane— Suite 101
Williston, VT 05495-2080
Phone (802) 879-2300 Fax (802) 879-2312
Toll Free (800) 366-8325

Barre

1311 US Route 302— Suite 500
Barre, VT 05641-7301
Phone (802) 479-4434 Fax (802) 479-4446
Toll Free (888) 870-7888

Rutland

56 Howe Street, Building A— Suite 200
Rutland, VT 05701
Phone (802) 786-5867 Fax (802) 786-5872
Toll Free (888) 370-4834

Springfield

100 Mineral Street— Suite 307
Springfield VT 05156-3168
Phone (802) 885-8883 Fax (802) 885-8885
Toll Free (866) 404-8883

DIVISION OF STATE POLICE—FIRE INVESTIGATION

Waterbury—45 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671-1300— (802) 244-8781—Fax (802) 241-5371